

CAREER NEWSFLASH



MMEA-64

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EDITORIAL



The FY04 SNCO Selection Boards are about to kick into high gear, beginning with the Gunnery Sergeant selection board that convenes on 19 April. With the deployment tempos elevating and the uncertainty of future operations, Marines need to be aware that promotions are still happening.

Our Marines are doing an outstanding job making sure their records are complete and they are ready for promotion. The level of competition is rising as individuals become more and more proactive. To better assist our junior Marines, the senior leadership is highly encouraged to review the Performance Evaluation System (MCO P1610.7E) with change 9. Several changes have been incorporated, having an effect on how the fitness reports are written. For example, PFT scores entered in block 8b of section A must reflect the last official entry made in the Marine Corps Total Forces System (MCTFS/3270). Any additional PFTs ran during that reporting period are annotated in Section I. Keeping abreast of such changes will help to ensure the accuracy of records is maintained.

On the subject of promotions, there are many Marines who may

not understand how the process works. To assist in educating and empowering Marines, the Promotions Branch of Manpower Management has released a video that explains these procedures. The video provides valuable information explaining how the promotion system works and is available for download at both the Promotion Branch's website as well as on the Enlisted Career Counselor home page. All Marines, especially Sergeants, are highly encouraged to view this video.

With the automated Performance Evaluation System coming on line this summer and the Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) becoming visible on line as well, maintaining records couldn't be easier. Marines will have access to review their information from virtually anywhere in the world, provided they have internet access. The Career Counseling website has posted everything necessary to assist Marines in the maintenance of those records from Performance Evaluation Review Boards to fixing fitness report date gaps.

The Marine Corps has made great strides in ensuring that our Marines are taken care of. There are countless tools available to enable individuals in preparing for success. 'Semper Fi' Marines and continue to motivate.

FY04 Selection Board Schedule

GySgt 8 Weeks 19 Apr—11 Jun 04

SSgt 10 Weeks 19 Jul—24 Sep 04

FY05 Selection Board Schedule

SgtMaj through 9 Weeks 19 Oct—17 Dec 04
MSgt

GySgt 8 Weeks 19 Apr—10 Jun 05

SSgt 10 weeks 19 Jul—23 Sept 05

At this time we would like to take a moment and bid farewell to two of our Counselors - 1stSgt Fernando Cabral and GySgt Preston Fuller. Both were selected to First Sergeant on the FY 04 board. 1stSgt Cabral has PCS orders to CWSS-36 in MCAS Iwakuni, Japan. GySgt Fuller has PCA orders to Officer Candidate School, right here in Quantico. Both Marines have served the counseling section faithfully and with distinction. The Career Counseling Unit will miss their wisdom and leadership. We wish them much success in the future.



By GySgt Payne
Enlisted Career Counselor, HQMC

THE ‘BEST AND FULLY QUALIFIED’ PART II

In the last issue of our newsletter we discussed the principle elements essential to becoming the “best and fully qualified.” This article is Part II of what the selection boards look at in terms of Marines’ competitiveness. In examining the competitiveness of Marines for the purpose of promotion, selection boards consider a number of factors, to include, but not limited to: demonstrated performance/achievement, leadership, experience, growth potential, motivation, and military proficiency.

It goes without saying that how well you perform your regular duties, as well as any additional duties, will weigh greatly in the selection board’s assessment. Therefore, Marines must continually strive to become “masters of their craft,” with the understanding that your Military Occupation Specialty, in more cases than not, is where the needs of the Marine Corps are met. Awards are usually the means

units use to recognize exceptional performance. However, not having received an award for exceptional performance does not automatically mean a Marine is viewed as being any less competitive.

Potential
This is a key factor in determining a Marine’s competitiveness

Let’s look at leadership. Leadership could very easily be viewed as the cornerstone on which our institution is built. The successful performance of challenging duties requiring a high order of responsibility, such as a special duty assignment, performance in combat or an unusual emergency situation, or the lack of disciplinary problems within a

section or unit, are in most cases good indicators of exceptional leadership. The opportunities abound for Marines to exhibit and exercise their leadership skills. It needn’t be a situation that requires an audience, but simply the conviction to uphold our core values. In terms of allowing

this to be made known to the selection board, it should be reflected in the reporting official's evaluation of the Marine (i.e. fitness reports).

Experience is another factor that could be used in determining competitiveness, particularly given current world events. However, it should once again be noted that not having been afforded the opportunity to get or gain certain experiences does not automatically translate to a Marine being viewed as any less competitive. Nonetheless, experiences such as combat experience, varied and/or demanding assignments, and special responsibilities can serve a Marine well, provided they have performed their duties in an exceptional manner.

Growth potential is a key factor examined in determining Marine's competitiveness. It is a means of recognizing what qualities and levels of experience are necessary to maintain the high standards of proficiency and leadership required to ensure combat readiness. By definition, it is the estimated ability to perform in the next higher grade. A Marine can help to increase his or her potential by following the leadership principle, "Know yourself, and seek self improvement," and by seeking guidance from reporting officials. Performance, progression, and improvement are the three things the counselors encourage Marines to demonstrate which should, in turn, increase their potential.

Motivation is another quality that Marines receive indoctrination in. However, it goes beyond a rousing cry of "ooh-rah!" Motivation can be demonstrated by a Marine's willingness to volunteer for critically important duties such as combat duty, overseas duty in undesirable areas, a special duty assignment, and even correspondence courses in particular skills.

Finally, we have military proficiency, which includes physical fitness, moral character, and maturity. In addressing proficiency, there are certain qualifications required of every Marine, such as marksmanship, swimming, and other prescribed skills. Every Marine should endeavor

to be as proficient in these areas as possible. It is understood that not every Marine will master each area. However, every possible attempt should be made to improve performance and proficiency each time the opportunity is afforded to do so. With regards to physical fitness, Marines must look beyond just having the ability to pass the PFT. The end state of being physically fit is to

be able to endure the rigors of combat, and to carry out the day-to-day functions within their respective MOS.

Important to any professional organization, and at the foundation of all great leaders, is moral character. It has been said that, "all it takes for evil to triumph, is for good men to do nothing." Marines, by virtue of courage, do the right things, in the right way, for the right reasons. Adhering to our Core Values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment is generally a sign of maturity, and it is all these things, in principle, that selection boards recognize when examining a Marine's competitiveness. The principle element essential to becoming the "Best and Fully Qualified" is following what is referred to as the "whole Marine" concept.



GYSgt DARBY TRAINS HIS MARINES ON THE PROPER PROCEDURES



By GYSgt Perkins
Enlisted Career Counselor, HQMC

BEING PROACTIVE

The Career Counseling Unit receives many calls from Marines just before a promotion board goes in session, wanting to see how they look or what they can do to make themselves more competitive. Career Counseling is very much like coaching, and coaching is done over the long term. When the 60 day MARADMIN from each promotion board is released, we no longer counsel those Marines who are in the promotion zone or above zone. About a third of the calls we receive during this time frame are from Marines in those zones. To be quite honest, 60 days prior to the board, there is not much we can tell these Marines that would be of any benefit to them. There is not enough time to accomplish anything at that point except updating their records. Performance levels are demonstrated over time. If a Marine has had poor performance up to this point, there is not much the counselors can advise, except how to work on improving performance for future boards.

As Career Counselors, we are in the coaching business and it is difficult to provide advice to Marines who have not been coached all along. It will generally take two or more years to show strong performance, progression, or recovery from adverse material. We do not give advice on the future just prior to the board, because we do not know whom we are counseling - a Marine who has been passed over, or a selected Marine. We need to determine what they should be advised on in order to be competitive for the next promotion board. We do counsel below zone Marines during this time, but again, it may take longer than a year to show improvement of performance or recovery from adverse material.



What are you going to do to break away from the pack?

Marines should seek counseling from Career Counselors and their Reporting Seniors (RS) on a consistent basis. Your RS sees you regularly and has certain expectations of you and how you should be performing. Your RS evaluates you and the peers you are compared against. Only your RS can tell you what you need to do to improve your performance in comparison with your peers. Career Counselors see what all Marines are doing across the Marine Corps. We debrief all SNCO selection boards and know specifics the board members were looking for, or things that helped certain Marines break out of the pack. This is the type of advice we can give. In most cases if not all, we will advise you to meet with your RS to assist you in your performance.

Marines need to know that we are not in the business of giving the proverbial "warm and fuzzy" when it comes to how competitive they look in zone for selection. We are here to educate, mentor and empower Marines to achieve greater success. We assist and advise Marines on becoming more competitive. The earlier a Marine pursues counseling, the more time he or she has to make necessary changes. So do not wait until the last minute to call us for advice; at that time there isn't anything we can do to assist you. The best time to call is two or more years away from being in zone. Don't wait until the last minute. Call us early and we will start coaching you!



By MSgt Coon
Head, Enlisted Career Counseling
Unit

MRO WORKSHEET

As the counselors talk to Marines on the phone and during visits to commands throughout the Marine Corps, we are still coming across Marines who do not use the Marine Reported On (MRO) worksheet properly. The majority of the Marine Corps (roughly 65%) employ the MRO worksheet as a rough draft for the fitness report, and approximately 15 to 20% use it as it is intended. The Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC) mandates the use of this form, as stated in Appendix D of the Performance Evaluation System (PES), MCO P1610.7E.

The MRO worksheet is a great tool that will assist the Marine in documenting what was accomplished during each reporting period. The worksheet will also enable Marines to discuss what their billet description is with their Reporting Seniors. It is also important to know this worksheet assists in the counseling process, which is necessary at the beginning of and throughout the reporting period. It serves to unleash a Marine's maximum potential. Counseling should not take place at the end of a reporting period. That time is for evaluation, as

it is to late to make any necessary changes and then becomes reactive in nature.

The MRO worksheet also enables Marines a way of providing some input for their fitness reports. The RS decides what goes on the report, and the MRO worksheet is a good way to get started. Using the worksheet should also aid in keeping sections B and C of the fitness report from

becoming generic. These 'Rubber Stamped' reports are common, especially in training



Sometimes we need to be told the way it is.

environments where the day-to-day operations appear to be cyclic. Although the overall mission does not change, there are usually different priorities throughout different reporting periods. Marines are strongly encouraged to use the MRO worksheet properly, because it will greatly enhance their abilities to grow as well as demonstrate their maximum potential.

As an additional note, the MRO Worksheet will soon be part of the automation of the PES presently being tested and scheduled to be released Marine Corps-wide during the summer of 2004. This addition to the PES program should make it easier to document accomplishments and track performance.

Use the MRO worksheet properly, because it will greatly enhance your abilities to grow as well as demonstrate your maximum potential



By GySgt Fuller
Enlisted Career Counselor, HQMC

MERITORIOUS PROMOTIONS FOR SNCOS

An overachiever is a Marine who constantly demonstrates that what they do is over and above expectations. They possess the unrelenting drive to improve themselves, their unit and the Marine Corps. Their awareness of the unit's operational commitments causes them to act on intent toward accomplishment of the mission, maintain high standards and train others to those same high standards. As leaders, they mentor their subordinates for success in future endeavors. Meritorious promotions and Marine/NCO of the quarter seem to always come from their unit. When these leaders send their subordinates to resident Professional Military Education courses, they thoroughly prepare them, providing a more favorable situation so they graduate with honors or receive leadership related awards, such as the GUNG-HO award. These are just a few examples of what overachievers have done in the past.



You have to push yourself to achieve a higher level!

Those Marines who demonstrate the ability to influence subordinates for success on and off of the battlefield are a true reflection of the leadership traits, principles and the core values we Marines live by. There are several SNCO Meritorious Promotion Programs that exist for recognition of those Marines that have proven to be overachievers.

Per the provisions outlined in the Enlisted Promotion Manual (EPM, MCO 1400.32C) and in recognition of Superior Performance, the CMC will promote, by means other than the regular promotion system, exceptionally well-qualified Marines in recognition of outstanding leadership and performance. Meritorious promotions are intended to promote Marines whose performance

is superior to that of their peers, or to promote Marines for specific actions or superior achievement. Meritorious promotions are not authorized above the grade of MSgt. MSgt Meritorious promotion allocations are limited to the Drill Instructor and Recruiter of the Year Programs. Meritorious promotion to 1stSgt is not authorized. Minimum TIG requirements are waived in the case of meritorious promotions.

However, compliance with minimum TIS requirements as shown in paragraph 1202 of the EPM, is mandatory. Determination of eligibility for meritorious promotion will be based on the performance of the Marine as reported in the commander's recommendation and on the Marine's military record. Meritorious promotions should not be used as rewards or when a personal commendation/award is appropriate, instead, it must be based on the Marine's demonstrated capability to discharge the responsibilities and duties of the next higher grade in a satisfactory manner. Commanders, in their

determination of qualifications for meritorious promotions, are guided by, but not limited to, the following:

1. Marines must have completed the required PME for the grade to which being recommended.
2. The Marine's performance of duty, in comparison with all known Marines of the same grade without regard to MOS/OccFld, must be to a significant degree superior to that of their peers in order to merit promotion over other qualified Marines in that grade, regardless of TIG.
3. The Marine exhibits superior performance on unusual assignments, reflecting favorably



MMEA-64

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**WE ARE ON THE
WEB,
GO TO...**

**WWW.USMC.MIL
THEN TO THE
CAREER LINK
THEN TO
ENLISTED CAREER
COUNSELING**

We have not decided all the topics for the next newsletter and would like to hear from you regarding what you want to know more about. Please send us your suggestions by email.

upon the Marine Corps.

Commanding Generals may submit, via naval correspondence, recommendations for combat meritorious promotion based on meritorious action and performance in combat or performance under combat conditions to CMC (MMPR-2). Commanders may submit recommendations for non-combat meritorious promotion based on a single meritorious act to the CMC (MMPR-2) via naval correspondence. The recommendation should include detailed justification and information about the qualifying act, the Marine's performance, leadership abilities and accomplishments. Examples of facts that may qualify for meritorious promotions (as outlined in MCO 1400.32C, EPM) are:

1. The winner of a national or higher-level marksmanship match.
2. The winner of individual marksmanship matches in the Olympic Games, Pan-American Games, or International Shooting Union Matches.
3. The invention of a weapon or device, or the development of a new technique/process, which is of Marine Corps-wide significance and produces a substantial savings in time and money on a continuing basis.
4. Commanding Generals may submit a recommendation for meritorious promotion to the grade of SSgt for the squad leader of the winning annual rifle squad (super squad) competition.
5. Commandant of the Marine Corps Drill Instructor of the Year Program.
6. Commandant of the Marine

Corps Recruiter of the Year Program. EAD recruiters may compete with active duty Marines for the award.

7. Commandant of the Marine Corps Marine Security Guard of the Year. Candidates must have a minimum of 12 months observed time and be on the same special duty assignment for the upcoming meritorious promotion period of either 1 January or 2 February. MCO 1650.39A (CMC Combined Awards Program) applies.
8. Meritorious SNCO promotions in the Operating Forces. CMC (MPP-20) will determine meritorious allocations for active duty Marines. The CMC (MPP-20) will assign allocations to MEF commanders and the CO, Marine Corps Security Force Battalion, via MARADMIN. Recommendations may be submitted at any time during the year, via naval message, to CMC (MMPR-2) for final approval. There is no time on station requirement for meritorious promotions in the Operating Forces.

SNCO meritorious promotions are authorized on a semiannual basis (2 January and 2 July) recognizing the most competitive Marines. MARADMINs are published to keep Marines informed of these allocations as well as the criteria needed for eligibility. There are several opportunities for early advancement. It takes hard charging Warriors to step up and answer the call.



**By 1stSgt Cabral
Enlisted Career
Counselor, HQMC**